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"El Grade de Coca Cola" Timeless Rewind Revamped

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2:48 PM MST

"El Grade De Coca Cola" presented at the Ruskin Group Theatre is a testament to how vaudeville comedy can be entertaining today, how languages don't need to be a barrier to laughter, and how theater can be universal entertainment. The play, co written by its lead actor Ron House (who plays Senor Don Pepe Hernandez) along with Alan Sherman (the Director) and Diz White and John Neville-Andrews (both not part of this production), is a mixture of the types of performances that graced the stages of old Broadway, with a live band, physical antics, and improved interactions with the audience. This is also a show in several languages Spanish, German, Italian, and English, yet written for all to understand. Its producer John Ruskin (also the Art Director of the Ruskin Group Theatre) opened the show Saturday Night September 7th with an announcement that this was a show where "you don't have to be quiet."

The Show begins with Lila Dupree who plays Consuelo Hernandez working the audience as a coca cola girl. One quickly finds that this is the story of Consuelo's father Senor Don Pepe Hernandez putting on a cabaret with the help of his family having had the true stars cancel. This theatrical company of Casa Hernandez consists of Consuelo, Miguel Vasquez (David Lago) (Understudy - Carlos Santos), Juan Rodriguez (Aaron Jackson), and Hernandez's daughter Maria (Played on Saturday Sept 7th by Understudy Denise Silva) (also played by Nina Brissey). In addition the Italian Cook Afredo makes an occasional appearance played by Paul Denk.

This rag tag group alternates playing the piano, drums, and goes through multiple acts from David Lago performing magic tricks gone wrong to Aaron Jackson performing as a short artist struggling with a canvas reminiscent of Chaplin himself. The show also touches on different styles of music from La Bamba to a German Rap routine reminiscent of Wayne's World, and 1950s Bubble Gum Pop. Denise Silva even plays a Mentalist. In addition, just like in old TV land, there is the occasional commercial performed live. This show is actually one that crosses borders and time and would be good for the entire family. One can see why this play has been extended and performed both here multiple times, New York, and in Europe.

This is not a review, but a message to those seeking entertainment, Shakespeare entertained for the masses, so also have the Ruskin Group with this production. More theater can achieve this end to bring life to live performances. If you like physical comedy and want the chance to see it done live, this show will be running to the end of the month on Fridays and Saturdays at 8 pm and Sundays at 2 pm. The Theatre is located at 3000 Airport Ave., Santa Monica, CA 90405. For information, especially should the show extend again, or for tickets visit the [Ruskin Group Theater](#) on line.

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Laura Tull

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